

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NEW DE 01809 051629Z

43

ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-11 ISO-00 MMS-03 SS-20 NSC-10 SPC-03

SAM-01 L-03 IO-14 AF-10 PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00

RSC-01 DODE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 DRC-01 /121 W

----- 068599

O 051430Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9515

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 1809

NEA PASS AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IN, UK, US

SUBJ: DIEGO GARCIA - NOTIFICATION TO INDIANS

REF: (A) STATE 019914; (B) NEW DELHI 1749; (C) NEW DELHI 1691

SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTION TO EMBASSY BRIEFING ON PROPOSED EXPANSION OF DIEGO GARCIA WAS CALM BUT GRIEVED. SHARP PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES AT THE PARLIAMENTARY SESSION BEGINNING FEBRUARY 18 ARE ANTICIPATED AND MEA SEES NO WAY OF DEFENDING US POLICY. EMBASSY'S JUDGMENT IS THAT, IF INDIANS WISH, THEY CAN DELAY MORE THAN PRO FORMA CRITICISM FOR TIME BEING, PLEADING NEED FOR CONSULTATION WITH OTHER INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL COUNTRIES. REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THEY WILL FOLLOW THIS OR MORE TRADITIONAL "PRINCIPLED" COURSE OF FIRM CONDEMNATION OF US. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING UP ON BRITISH PRESENTATION TO GOI FEBRUARY 4 (REF B) AND IN ORDER TO PRESENT US VIEWS TO GOI BEFORE CHARGE AND AMBASSADOR HELMS CALLED ON FOREIGN SECRETARY THIS AFTERNOON, POL COUNSELOR PRESENTED AIDE MEMOIRE TO MEA JOINT SECRETARY (SOUTH ASIA) KAMTEKAR THIS MORNING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 01809 051629Z

BASED ON REF A.

2. MEETING CORDIAL BUT SERIOUS WITH KAMTEKAR REPEATING A NUMBER OF THE ARGUMENTS MADE BY SECRETARY (EAST) TRIVEDI TO BRITISH PREVIOUS DAY. KAMTEKAR SAID GOI REGRETTED US DECISION, PARTICULARLY AFTER GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S VIEWS ON IOZP, AND SAID THAT FRANKLY US WAS "FLAUNTING" WILL OF THE GA. HE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE MOVE WOULD INEVITABLY INCREASE TENSION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AREA AND REPEATED TRIVEDI'S OBSERVATION THAT IT "MIGHT LEAD TO A GLOBAL REACTION". HE REITERATED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE INDIANS TO UNDERSTAND WHY IT WAS NECESSARY AT A TIME WHEN US-SOVIET DISCUSSIONS ON REDUCTION OF FORCES WAS GOING ON IN EUROPE. HE INQUIRED WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE DISCUSSIONS HE UNDERSTOOD AT THE TIME HAD BEEN MOOTED

BETWEEN THE US-USSR ON LIMITATION OF FORCES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN. HE SAID THAT, SPEAKING FRANKLY, THE REACTION OF "THE INDIAN PEOPLE" AND THE PARLIAMENT WOULD BE MOST UNFAVORABLE AND THAT THE GOI COULD NOT DEFEND THE US DECISION. THE US MOVE WOULD BE SEEN AS THE USE OF AFRO-ASIAN TERRITORY FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MILITARY BASE, AND THIS WOULD BE STRONGLY RESENTED.

3. POL COUNSELOR REPLIED THAT INDIAN GOVERNMENT COULD HAVE BEEN UNDER NO ILLUSION OF MISAPPREHENSION AS TO US LACK OF SUPPORT FOR AND DISAGREEMENT WITH BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE UNGA RESOLUTION ON THE IOZP. US ACTION WAS TAKEN BECAUSE OF GROWING EVIDENCE OF SOVIET USE OF PRESSURE AND MILITARY DISPOSITIONS TO EXERT ITS INFLUENCE IN THE GENERAL AREA AND TO ENSURE THAT SECURITY BALANCE WAS MAINTAINED IN AN AREA OF IMPORTANCE TO THE US AND OTHER COUNTRIES. POL COUNSELOR NOTED PRESENCE OF SOVIET SHIPS IN INDIAN OCEAN FOR LAST TEN YEARS, IN CONSIDERABLY LARGER NUMBERS THAN US NAVY IN RECENT YEARS, AND USE SOVIETS HAD MADE OF BERBERA AND MOORING BUOYS OFF SOCOTRA, SEYCHELLES, AND CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO. POL COUNSELOR NOTED THAT DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION CONTINUED TO BE IN CONTEXT OF USE OF THIS FACILITY FOR SERVICING OF US SHIPS DEPLOYED INTO THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THAT IT WAS NOT CURRENTLY ENVISAGED AS A MEANS AT WHICH US NAVY VESSELS WOULD BE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NEW DE 01809 051629Z

PERMANENTLY STATIONED. HE COMMENTED THAT THERE WAS A DISTINCTION BETWEEN A FIXED FACILITY SUCH AS DIEGO GARCIA AND THE FLOATING FACILITIES THE SOVIETS MAINTAINED IN THE INDIAN OCEAN BUT THAT IT WAS ONE WITHOUT A REAL DIFFERENCE. FOR THIS REASON, THE USG WOULD BE MOST PUZZLED AND DISTURBED IF THE GOI, WHATEVER ITS SPECIFIC REACTION TO THE DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION MIGHT BE, FOCUSED ON THE US ACTION WITHOUT CONSIDERING THE ACTIVITY AND

ACTIONS IN RECENT YEARS OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE SAME AREA.

4. KAMTEKAR SAID HE TOOK NOTE OF THIS POINT BUT EMPHASIZED THE INDIANS HAD NO INDEPENDENT INFORMATION ON ANY SOVIET MOORING BUOYS IN THE INDIAN OCEAN OR ANY SOVIET FACILITIES AT BERBERA WHICH WERE ANALOGOUS TO THOSE PLANNED FOR DIEGO GARCIA. POL COUNSELOR OBSERVED THE EVIDENCE WAS THERE TO BE SEEN, AND HE ASSUMED THE GOI WOULD COME TO THE APPROPRIATE CONCLUSIONS IF IT INVESTIGATED THE FACTS. KAMTEKAR CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE HOPED THE USG HAD NOTED THE RESTRAINT WITH WHICH THE GOI HAD REACTED TO THE PRESENCE OF THE US NAVY TASK FORCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN LAST FALL AND TO US NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS SINCE THEN. HE SAID THE GOI HAD HOPED THAT THE US WOULD NOT GO BEYOND SUCH DEPLOYMENTS AND THEREFORE REGRETTED THAT THE RESTRAINT DISPLAYED BY THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT DID NOT APPEAR TO HAVE HAD THE EFFECT HOPED FOR.

5. COMMENT: NO OFFICIAL INDIAN GOVERNMENT COMMENT HAS AS YET BEEN GIVEN TO THE PRESS, ALTHOUGH ADVERSE EDITORIAL COMMENTS (NEW DELHI USIS MEDIA REACTION REPORT NO. 430, FEBRUARY 4, 1974) GIVE SOME INDICATION OF WHAT PRESS EXPECTS TO BE GOVERNMENT REACTION. WE BELIEVE GOI'S PREFERENCE WOULD BE TO AVOID STRIDENT RESPONSE ANTICIPATED BY BRITISH (REF B) AND INSERTION OF POTENTIALLY ABRASIVE ELEMENTS IN INDO-US RELATIONSHIP AT THIS TIME. WE ARE NOT SURE, HOWEVER, THAT POLITICAL CLIMATE, PARTICULARLY AFTER PARLIAMENT RECONVENES IN TWO WEEKS, WILL ENABLE IT TO AVOID FAIRLY STRONG, CRITICAL COMMENTS. AT A TIME WHEN INDIANS ARE TALKING ABOUT NEW DISCUSSIONS WITH THE US ON IMPORTANT ISSUES (REF C) AND ARE FACED WITH SERIOUS ECONOMIC PRESSURES FOR WHICH THEY MAY HOPE TO OBTAIN SOME

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 NEW DE 01809 051629Z

RELIEF FROM US, IT IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT SOME SENIOR GOI LEADERS WILL URGE THAT INDIA NOT TAKE THE LEAD IN A QUIXOTIC ATTACK ON THE DIEGO GARCIA ISSUE. THESE MAY BE ABLE TO URGE THAT CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE NON-ALIGNED AND PARTICULARLY THE INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL COUNTRIES SHOULD BE HELD PRIOR TO COMING TO ANY FIRM POLICY DECISIONS. DELAY AND MODERATION WOULD PROBABLY RESULT FROM SUCH A COURSE. OTHERS MAY URGE A PROMPT AND "PRINCIPLED" CONDEMNATION OF US POLICY. FOR THE MOMENT, WE'RE SITTING BACK WAITING TO SEE WHOSE SHOES DROP.

6. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY DID NOT RAISE THE SUBJECT IN HIS LATER DISCUSSION WITH THE CHARGE AND AMBASSADOR HELMS. SCHNEIDER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NAVAL FORCES, MILITARY BASES, PORT FACILITIES, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, MILITARY BASE AGREEMENTS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974NEWDE01809
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740255/aaaabzmc.tel
Line Count: 168
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: (A) STATE 019914; (B) NEW DELHI 1749, ; (C) NEW DELHI 1691
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 JUN 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <31 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DIEGO GARCIA - NOTIFICATION TO INDIANS
TAGS: MARR, IN, UK, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005